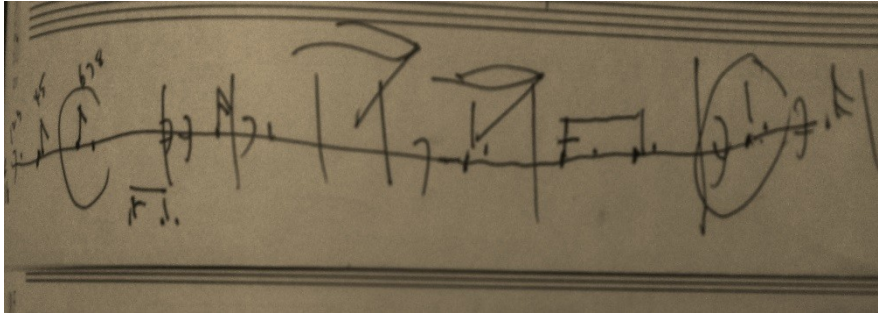


Oscar E. Munoz



Aesthetic Notes

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Mandala Ediciones

C/ Tarragona, 26

28045, Madrid

Tel. +34 914678528

e-mail:mandala@libroverde.com

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Contents	
The Socio-Epistemological Dimension of Music	
Composition	
Music material and music idea	
Musical Action and Music Theory	
Silence	
The taming of the artist	
What makes a text to be a poem	
Lyrical Citizen	
To be here	
Self-Reliance	
On the Beautiful and the Sublime	
Canon and Narratives of Domination	
Social Media and Endorphins	
Dictionaries and Pantheons	
Quid tibi tanto operest, mortalis?	
The Knight of the Sad Countenance	
Free Will	
Where are we going?	
Physics and Metaphor	
The Spanish Narrative of Identity	
The Strength of Freedom	
Antigone	
Giants turning into Windmills	
Again on the Sublime	
Samsara	
Sequential time, mathematics and narrative	
Intelligence, Consciousness and the Unheimlich	

Epilogue in Spanish: Composición Liminal	

The socio-epistemological dimension of music composition

Neither our individual destinies, nor our future as species are written in the stars. For the same reasons, there is not a music of the spheres beyond the orbit of the Platonic composer and mathematician. Transcendental idealism is the remnant of the ancient fears and superstitions, not only entertained by the old narratives but also by the not-so-obvious mythologies of the universal law inherited by philosophy and later by modern science. Not all modern science believes in the existence of a universal law, but its Queen, theoretical physics, worships such hypostasized order of the universe, giving the norm for how we should think about the cosmos, and defining reality disregarding the serious epistemological problems of completeness faced by formal systems after Gödel, expensively selling their tale about the universe in tune with the most careless medieval metaphysics. This scientific mess, poorly balanced by the advances of life sciences, helps very little to the

development of a musical practice based on our human law, i.e., in our neurophysiological limitations.

Music composition is mathematical, inasmuch mathematics (remember that the Greek root of the word is related to knowledge) represents basic epistemological actions of the living beings (not only humans), as Changeaux and Dehaene have shown through neuroscientific experimentation. Music composition, like math, is an epistemological action which establishes spatio-temporal relationships among objects, a cognitive multidimensional process which creates life experiences, ordering life accordingly. As any syntactic algebra, it can be interpreted (modeled) in many different reference frames, assigning object-values to its constructions, whether sounds, colors, space-extensions, emotions, poetic meanings, etc. In this sense, music composition goes beyond not only mathematics but also beyond what our traditions (including the avant-garde) have passed down to us as art of sounds.

I remember, quite some time ago, a conversation with Iannis Xenakis at the Viitasaari New Music Festival (August, 8th, 1986) in which I objected to his Parmenidean exposition the importance of aesthetic decisions in composing, not as much in terms of the choice of beautiful sound objects as in terms of the role played by freedom in the determination of a piece, which an exclusively mathematical orientation in composing seemed to deny. His answer was that he valued music in terms of the intelligence used to manufacture a piece, understanding intelligence in mathematical terms, i.e., according to a mythology of the universal law in which there is a unique truth and a right way to express it, in his case, an interpretation of the Markovian algebra for complexity. But intelligence is not just a question of syntactical complexity reducible to the algebra of thermodynamics, for there is an emergent semantical complexity in life which in fact does not fit very well into the traditional mathematical thinking, whether stochastic or not: the complexity of bio-social phenomena defy the simplicity of our formalized conceptual models. Music composition is a social phenomenon and can only be understood encompassing a wider realm of

symbolic constructions, which are also the frame for mathematics (despite the vehement denial of the recalcitrant Platonists) and for any human action.

At the same time, the acknowledgement of the socio-epistemological dimension of music frees composition of the conditionings of music industry, the concert hall, or the world of art, which today tame creative action under the whip of old social inertias (the genius religions), for the epistemological value of composition, its applicability in many different reference frames, makes it a tool for the general symbolical development of the human being. The extraordinary vitality of the music composition of the XX century grew in part out of the daring of the avant-garde movement, but also out of its uncompromising attitude in relation to its social status, as a realm for free aesthetical action, a play proposal to break social and individual ancient shackles.

Music material and music idea

A persistent discussion that I had with Morton Feldman was about the relationship between the music sonic material of a piece and the musical idea for the organization of the work. Feldman always thought that it is the material what determines and conditions a composition, what makes it work for a specific time-span and not for other. His orientation was mainly orchestrational and harmonic, so the material choices would have to do with the right chord orchestration, the appropriate and careful choice of progressions, registers and timbres. My answer was that such choices of orchestration had a double foundation, empirical and conceptual, and that if we separate them we only obtain an incomplete picture of the composition. In fact, I insisted, it is the conceptual part in the choice of the material what gives a link between the microharmony of the chordal progressions and the general structure of the piece (as much in tonal as in atonal music). My arguments never convinced him and he kept composing in his wonderful

Bergsonian way, but the discussion has helped me, through the years, to better understand my own expectations about the compositional action.

The tension between the sonic-perceptual and the structural-conceptual part of a composition is better understood in a general epistemological frame. Put in Kantian terms (*First Critique*. A51): our conceptions and musical ideas without music material are empty, and our sonic constructions without a conceptual frame are blind.

What kind of morphisms can we establish between ideas and sonic materials? The most common are those given by our traditions: instrumental sounds and contrapuntal and harmonic structures to organize them according to different theoretical principles, going from the empirical to the conceptual. But also, there have been morphisms which gave a sonic material to a particular conceptual structure, going from the conceptual to the empirical. These morphisms make our concepts audible, they give an aural intuition to something which is not perceptible through the senses. Examples of these morphisms are found in

Dufay's *Nuper Rosarum Flores*, which reproduces the form of the Cathedral of Florence in the structure of the piece, or the adaptation that Lejaren Hiller made for computer of a piece of Johannes Kepler based on the proportions of the planets of the solar system, or, say, a piece that would use the pattern of reproduction of cells and bacteria and assign them to two durational patterns for a percussion duet. In this second category of pieces, we obtain new perceptual objects which render abstract ideas into intuitions expanding the world of sonic materials beyond our more spontaneous ways of creating them. Another question is the aesthetical interest of those new objects.

Musical Action and Music Theory

1. We consider that A is the conceptual ground or foundation of B when the cognition of B is impossible without the cognition of A, and A is immediately certain for our intuition. We say that A gives a semantical self-image, for it does not need further explanation, but B cannot produce a semantical self-image.

2. Music Theory has developed since Antiquity with the aid of mathematics, reaching today a fully mathematical status.

3. Mathematics is a formalized symbolic language.

4. Tarski's theorem states that a formalized language cannot produce a semantical self-image.

Therefore, music theory could not be the ground of musical action.

In fact, music theory -as well as musical action- are based on the social life of the human group, which in turn are based on the homeostatic protocols for survival: emotions.

Silence

Silence is more than repose or the mere absence of sound, for repose has a duration, and absence is the negation of something. This obvious facts were made completely clear and explicit by Cage in his wonderful 4'33''. Thus, it should make more sense to talk about *silences*, in plural, avoiding the common reification of a concept that usually expresses an indefinite absence and metaphysically grows to express a final and pervasive state of the cosmos.

In music, there is one kind of silence whose function is orchestrational: we decide which voices intervene, and the absence of a voice at a given moment in a piece implies choices of color and texture. Furthermore, as we read in Berlioz (*Treatise upon Orchestration*), silence can be obtained through orchestration: *With the view of expressinig a lugubrious silence, I have in a cantata divided the double-basses into four parts ; causing them thus to sustain long pianissimo chords, beneath a*

decrecendo of all the rest of the orchestra. In fact, if Berlioz's treatise is to be taken as relevant to traditional orchestration, we find several places in the work where the concept of silence plays a clear and conscious orchestrational function.

There are also contrapuntal silences, related to texture as well, but performing a more basic determination of lines. These are silences which give time location and shape the musical discourse.

A third type of silence is the harmonic absence, which, like the orchestrational silence, can only be understood as a choice for no action. For instance, a plagal cadence could be understood as the absence of a tonic chord, and in general, any play with harmonic sequences which frustrates expectations is the construction of a silence. This kind of silence is even easier to notice than the orchestrational, for in tonal music we expect particular cadences in particular locations of the piece, while the orchestrational choices of color have a wider range of possibilities. In serial music, the silence-absence occurs in relation to the structure of the given series of the piece and its traditional transformations.

Silence is also a religious concept, complementing and making meaningful the myth of the primordial sound, a favorite myth among musicians. Sound and silence together have given a rich spectra of metaphors for the expression of life's persistent mystery, furthermore, they conform a full mythology in which the musician can express a wide variety of cognitive and social emotions. Toru Takemitsu has put it in terms of the modern musical religious experience: *Confronting silence by uttering a sound is nothing but verifying one's own existence.*

There is a further dimension of musical silence which can be extended to any epistemological experience. Through the action of memory (Mnemosine), silence extends and transforms sound on the inner dimension of the listener-composer. The piece of music extends beyond its sound parameters into the realm of the listener particular connections. The semantics of the piece build upon basic emotions and memories, complexifying the original input. Silence is needed to make the piece intelligible, to give it a meaning. Silence becomes a receptacle for musical reverberation both of the physical sound and of the psychological process initiated by the music. There are a number

of Bach pieces (see the *Ricercare* of *The Art of the Fugue*, or the *Contrapunctus X* of the *Musical Offering*, etc.), Brahms, Mahler, and many others, which include this kind of silences. For instance, he writes at the end of the piece a white note and right after a silence of white (instead of writing a whole note) in which the piece gains an extra time for its processing, both at the acoustic and the psychological level. When not in the score, this kind of silence is spontaneously produced at the end of a performance, sometimes unfortunately broken by an insensitive rush for thunderous applause.

Haikai and Zen

My relation to Japanese aesthetics began with a course in Zen that I took at the University of Buffalo, back in another life time, in the land of the Tonawandas. The teacher was a Korean ex-monk sent to the West by his master to spread Buddhism. I actually dropped the course on the first week, for the main book was *Nature* (yes, he wrote that on the board with a capital N), and I believed him. I invited him over for tea and discussed the Capture of the Ox, an allegory of the spiritual quest wonderfully depicted in ancient drawings on a book by Dassetz Suzuki. In those days, I still believed in the idea of finding one self, as if a pair of lost keys in the sands of time, and therefore, in the idea of stages in an imaginary trip to the nowhere land of bliss and truth, precisely the theme of the Ox Hunt. I asked him in which of the 10 stations of the spiritual journey was thriving , and answered -to my delight- that sometimes in 5, others in 10, but then again dropping to 1 ,and so on. We laughed for quite a while. I never saw him again, I did not called him or went back

to his classes at the university, for I did not want to break the lightning clarity of that sparkling moment.

As I understand the Haikai, they are about such lightning clarity, a rare phenomenon in the poetic arena which requires both effort and spontaneity, a combination that can only be synthesized in the limits of the human psyche.

The taming of the artist

Over the past century, the performing arts have tried to abandon the traditional social settings in favor of new scenarios for the representation of the work of art. This simple action increases the liminality of performance, for the ritual needs closed and well established scenarios. The resistance to such changes comes mainly from the general public, which needs to identify the performative actions within a mythical-ritual axis in order to give it credit. Such an authority values art from the point of view of ancient mythological actions. This produces a curious paradox. On the one hand, the general public desires and looks for the unanimity of criteria in relation to the work of art, it is the desire for a universal law. We need judgments like: “Beethoven's immortal symphonies”, even when we never took the time to listen to all of them in order to justify such a criterion. On the other, we want the artist to be original, which implies the impossibility of a consensus in relation to his/her work, for there are not clear grounds for the judgment. This

way, the artist is tamed by the whip of traditional art forms. His/ hers only escape is the neurosis of an excessive individuality, which is always judged in relation to the traditional art form, so even his individuality becomes part of the same whip. The only way out for the artist is the direct work over the narratives of identity, but this implies a form of art which is not yet recognized as such.

What makes a text to be a poem

With this question I do not imply the distinction between *true poem* and *false poem*, for I don't believe in it, but rather, what properties must have a text to be identified as a poem? It is a subject that I have entertained for long and I would like to open a debate giving some possible answers.

Traditionally, it was meter and rhyme, or, in a broader sense, formal properties of sound the reference frame for our qualification. Archaic poetry was still linked to the constraints of memory of oral tradition, and formal properties gave an easy and understandable protocol. Such a categorization opens up a clear understanding of early poetry, its connexion with shaman incantations and *magic*, long before writing, in the world of the myths of *anima mundi*. But the question became a bit more entangled when philosophy entered the scene. The philosophical poems of Parmenides, Empedocles, and other presocratics had the formal properties of sound of, say, Homer, or Ibis, but the

subject matter was so different that it was rather arbitrary to assign them to a same genre.

But is there an specific content which we can call poetic? I have identified the beginnings of an inner realm of expression in Egypt and Mesopotamia derived from the recitation of the ritual texts which ended up giving the core of an emotional dimension generally accepted and identified as poetic. I call this the *lyrical citizen*, and as I have analyzed it somewhere else, is related to the extensions of the idea of immortality to all citizens at large which begun in Egypt after XVI B.C. as a narrative creation of the Priests of Osiris. The realm of the lyrical citizen is constituted by the difference between his/her social persona (the persona linked to a specific economic activity) and a narrative transcendental persona which he or she considers to give a deeper form of identity. The lyrical citizen is the lyrical I, which is independent of the economic action, a persona invested with all the properties created by immortality myths.

We then have the formal properties of sound and the realm of the lyrical citizen that put together would give a criterion to answer our question. Modern poetry, like modern music,

changed the sound properties very dramatically extending the rhythmic, harmonic and formal realms far beyond tradition, so we should, of course, consider formal properties of sound in this extended sense. Even the realm of the lyrical citizen has been extended to encompass a vast world of emotions which, although rooted in them, not necessarily follow the transcendental patterns established by old poetry.

Nonetheless, we could find examples of prose works which could defy such a simple characterization. Lezama Lima's *Paradiso* is a clear example, among others of an extended list. A third criterion could be added which modifies both the two aforementioned giving an hypothetical continuum of literary works: the semantic density of the images. *Ceteris paribus*, we tend to consider more poetic a text that builds a denser web of semantic relations.

Lyrical Citizen

The countercultural movements that have flourished all around the world since 2008 represent a new instance of a very old paradox of political metaphysics: the defense of a private realm of rights within a social structure of stratification. The paradox is produced by the fact that it is precisely the structure of stratification what created the conditions of possibility for the genesis of the private realm represented by the social persona of the citizen, and such structure is not compatible with the implications of those rights. The present formulation of the paradox within the narrative of the human being, an abstract social persona which is the subject of some ideal social rights, is just the latter development of a very old religious story. It is obvious that the root of the paradox intermingles with the roots of social stratification which lies at the foundation of urban settlements, but it is not only explained by this phenomenon, and needs to be understood in relation to the creation of a very unique social persona, depositary of a transcendental and private emotional sphere, that I will call the lyrical citizen.

In a passage from Aeschylus's *Oresteia* [1983, 65] we find what may probably be the first register of the psychological condition of individuation in social terms: I hold my own mind and think apart from other men. It is not surprising that such a proclamation appears within the religious context of Attic theatre, for it is the harmonization of the tension between the social personae, the regulation of social homeostasis, what drives Mythico-Ritual performances. The fact that we can understand the sentence of Aeschylus shows that its content is false, because a mind isolated from the others could not make itself understood. This is the paradox:

1. I cannot think or express my individuation without a language.
2. Language is the construction of an historical group not an individual.

Therefore, I cannot express my individuation on individual terms (unless -of course- I introduce transcendental postulates, which, as we will see, has been the case). Furthermore, individuation is only thinkable in social terms, or what is

equivalent: individual identity is a question of communication and social action.

Such paradox was the point of departure for the theory of the development of personality in relation to social structure, as treated by Durkheim [1964], Mead [1934], Parsons [1964] or Habermas [2010]. Composing their conclusions in terms of contemporary affective neuroscience [Panksepp, 1998] we could say that the individual person is the result of the particular set of ideas developed by a human group [Durkheim, 1964], acted through the body individuation as a reply to the expectations of social behavior that are generalized through linguistic interchange and serve to the purpose of social homeostasis. Social personae are created in these communicative actions [Habermas, 2010] through mimetic narrative processes conditioned by the particular economic action which constitute the homeostatic structure of the community.

The person of the lyrical citizen, or the individual persona, is the result of the intersection of the narratives of the economic actions of the ancient city with the ideological development of the narratives of immortality in the direction of an individual

soul. The concept of individual persona appeared linked to that of anima as a transpersonal entity, as an explanatory substratum for the economic actions and of the social personae that are derived from it. It has its source in the pre-urban, or anima mundi societies, whose personae differentiation is still pre-individual, a tension between the individual body and the collective narrative, for there is not yet a difference between the economic identity of the subject -whether mother, hunter or any other group persona- and a private identity beyond the one given by the community and the particular economical action. The personae of the narratives of the anima mundi are not individuals as much as types, whether economical, of kinship, of age, or, like the totem-ancestor, linguistic and metaphysical. The survival of the ancestors in oneiric experiences as well as in the narratives and Mythico-Ritual ceremonies, extends the active personal community to the world of the dead, which is present in social life, explicitly remembered and implicitly incorporated in the memory of the group through the narratives and rituals that passed on to the new generations. The linguistic hypostatic dimension of both the ancestor-totem and the world of dreams

give the grounds for the concept of anima. As a general concept, it is not the direct result of an economic determination, but of a self-reflective explanation of life that includes in its bosom the phenomenon of death. The soul is a simple hypothesis that explains at the same time the persistence of the memory of the dead, the world of dreams, and a spontaneous valuation upon nature by which we are able to understand it immediately and feel part of it.

The notion of an individual anima implies a contradiction of terms, for the concept anima, inherited from the narratives of the anima mundi, refers to the most general apprehension of life, whereas its simultaneous assignation to an individual body takes as referent the most particular. The concept is therefore always fuzzily understood, but draws its praxiological meaning from the individuation of the body acting semantically as a synonymous for individual life. However, an individual life does not express a private realm of emotions, for these are general protocols of mammal behavior for survival and communication developed during evolution, not individual traits. Since our emotional life is organized around the basic social emotions [Panksepp], a

private emotional realm could only be the result of an extra-life development, as a dissociation of the economic life of the individual in relation to the group and a hypothetical existence beyond the economic activities. In anima mundi societies, such dissociation does not even exist, for their mild (or non-existent) stratification harmonizes the economic and the transcendental social personae, but urban societies, with their division between rulers and ruled, favor the development of transcendental personae. The rupture had a double engine, for the transcendental development of the anima mundi figure of the ancestor went hand in hand with the economic developments of the city which created the conditions for leisure (non-economical) time of the citizen. The concept of immortality of the totem-ancestor, once applied to the early kings and the noble, introduced a double realm of experience which provided the suitable conditions for the progressive weakening of the actual life experience in favor of another world. As we can observe in the examples provided by the classical studies of

James Frazer,¹ in the early stratified societies, the immortality was a privilege of the rulers, but the conditions of possibility for an emotional realm beyond life experience where solidly founded.

The generalized narratives of immortality will not take place until the development of the myths of the universal law [Munoz, 2013]. Particularly influential were those elaborated by the Osiris' priests of the 16th Century before zero (b.z.) in the New Kingdom, following the convulsion of the Hyksos interregnum, narratives of immortality that served as paradigm for those which came after them, not only in the form of the cults, but in the extension of immortality to ordinary men [Edwards, Gadd, Hammond, 2008]. It is interesting to notice that the progressive ascension of Osiris to the Egyptian pantheon at the end of the Old Kingdom (XXII b.z.) was parallel to the development of the secular literature (in the Middle Egyptian dialect) during the period of the IX-XII dynasties (2160-1800 b.z. aprox.). It also coincides with the appearance of some sort of Egyptian middle

¹ See Frazer, for example among the Tonga, who maintain aristocratic ideas of immortality, for only the chiefs are immortal (and later gods), whereas the *tooas*, the common persona, has a perishable soul. Ibid. p.p. 79-84.

class formed by craftsmen, tradesmen and small farmers [Edwards, Gadd and Hammond. 2008, 506], that had the time for the development of a private realm of emotions. We read in the text *Dispute of a Man with his Soul*, the dialog of a man weary of life with the full blown persona of his soul in which otherworld considerations condition human emotional life, n-aryzing at the same time the basic emotions. It seems reasonable to think that in uncertain times, in liminal situations, the Osiris myths of afterlife would find a more receptive audience that under steady periods of changeless social order. The weakening of the authority of the King produced the strengthening (and progressive independence) of the universal law that he was supposed to represent, and specially, of the priestly caste that controlled the techniques of such law (the techniques of civilization) as well as the emergent metaphysical knowledge of the narratives of identity, and which included the myths of immortality.

The transcendental dimension of the personal identity derived from the tales of immortality was completed with the development that lyric made of the psychological sphere thus

inaugurated. In early Babylonian literature (2120-1800 b.z), in the works of the king Shulgi, the son of Ur-Nammu, we see how the development of the private realm occurred first among the noblemen. The Kings and the Noble, the rulers of Mesopotamia (the Anunaki that we read in the Enuma Elish), experienced the tension between their social economic persona and the ideological one which resulted from their mythical role. It was in the liminal realm between ritual poetry and its courtly developments where germinated the notion of a private citizen. The shift from the public narratives of the fertility rites (which contained the immortality intuitions of urban communities) to a narrower courtesan sphere turned the models of the ritual Epithalamion (like the Mesopotamian of Dumuzi and Inanna²) into courtesan love poetry. Ritual emotions were thus enaryzed (made n-ary), and then enaryzed further in the lyrical expression of this new private emotional dimension made by the middle classes of Egypt and Mesopotamia, writings that towards the

² Texts directly related to the divine figures or linked to them, such as *Love in the Gipar*, *The Ecstasy of Love*, *The Bliss of the Wedding Night*. See these text in *The Ancient Near East*. Vol. II. Ed. Cit. p.p. 195-199.

12th Century b.z. were already a widespread practice in the Middle East.

On the other hand, if we observe Chinese poetry of the Chou period, in the Classic of Poetry or The Book of Odes (Shijing) that collects poems of the 11th to the 8th Centuries b.z. we do not find the voice of a lyrical citizen, but rather group emotions. In ode 27, we read: I think of the ancient men, and then truly I find my heart [Karlgreen,1950,16)] a declaration which implies that the meaning is in the past, not in the idea of the unique present of the poet where the lyrical epiphany takes place. We observe throughout the whole book an analogous absence of the private realm found in Mesopotamia: the descriptions and observations of economic and aesthetical nature are protocolized in the manner of proverbs, with a moral content which is always in relation to the group customs, to the economic action of economic personae. China had a middle class of merchants equivalent to the Mesopotamian one (especially in the Spring and Autumn Period (722-481 b.z.), but lacked the myths of immortality for the general population of Egypt, or the immortal Anunaki persona of the Mesopotamian cities. In fact, we have to

wait until Qu Yuan's poetry in IV b.z., to hear the voice of a lyrical citizen, fully blossomed in the narratives of immortality of Taoism. Something similar happened with the birth of Greek lyric in the 7th Century b.z., when the emotions expressed in the myths and rituals were redirected towards a reflection about human existence from the perspective of the common citizen, whose emotional private sphere, a transformation of the type offered by mystic rites (Orphic, Eleusinian, etc.), was declared and reclaimed as the kernel of an individual persona.

If the general population is immortal, the political State that is derived from it is trans-historical and trans-personal in a very concrete economic sense: the debt-guilt (in relation to civilization) over which the power of the elites was built has the counterpart of an inalienable right, eternal life. When only the elites were immortal, the masses (including any possible middle class) were irrelevant in the civilizing drama. The notion of immortality makes the masses members of a stable ideal community, for it implies the creation of a persona –a symbolic complexified variant of the *anima mundi*- which underlies their active economic social personae and, to the extent that it is none

of the others (but a mere metaphysical narrative of identity), a persona which is relatively independent of the general Mythico-Ritual actions, and has a private sphere of action. The political expansion of these ideas will not take place until the limitation of national identities that resulted from the Greek-Persian synthesis of Alexander. The Cynics contributed to create them with their critique of the social order and the desacralization of the territory, something which prepared the terrain for the Stoic ideology of the universalism of the law, whose foundation is the universalism of the Logos.

Even though the contents of the elites' first personal lyric will be similar to the lyrical compositions of the common citizens, like the ones we find in Greek poetry, or later on in the China of the time of the Six Dynasties (222-589 a.z.),³ it will be the perspective of the common citizen, not bound to any caste, the one capable of providing a dimension of universality that characterizes the lyric (a universality of privacy) as the expression of a social persona independent of the structures of

³ Between the Han and the Tang great Dynasties.

the king-god.⁴ Curiously enough, this perspective of the private emotional sphere, by being severed from the Mythico-Ritual axis where it belonged, achieved self-consciousness through this difference, although it did not discovered itself as a narrative of immortality but precariously anchored to the transience and futility of individuation. Immortality will be for the lyrical citizen an ideal requirement of the trans-personality of his emotion, of a form of self-consciousness for which he identifies himself with wider life cycles, with the trans-personal symbolic construction of the individual soul. This self-narrative tension between the universal and the transitory, the group and the individual, the immortality and the individual death, will traverse lyric poetry from its origins to our days as its reason for being. Such tension constructs the specific social persona that today we call the human individual. The lyrical person understands the tie of civic structure, his link to some economic

⁴ Expressed through some verses of Tao Chien (365-427 A.Z.): *No use discussing immortality /When just to keep alive is hard enough. /Of course I want to roam in paradise, /But it's a long way there and the road is lost. (Substance, Shadow, Spirit.* In Lawall, Sarah, and Mack Maynard, Editors. *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*. Volume B. W.W. Norton & Company. New York and London. 2002. p.p. 1363-1364.)

social persona within the Mythico-Ritual web, and will search for a sphere in which his personal emotive individuation may be able to prosper, a domain that could be no other than an idealized image of nature as that which is opposed to the city, the place of stratification and of the economic personae that negates the intimate and lyrical voice. From Virgil to the Green utopias of today, passing through the final dreams of Alonso Quijano or the healthy mindedness of Whitman's outdoors, the lyrical citizen wishes to wander, like Wang Wei, in the blue lights of ideal and eternal mountains, away from a foreign and imposed stratification alien to its inner emotional realm.

The creation of the lyrical citizen gave the conditions of possibility for the invention of the Greek political citizen which culminated in the Hellenistic idea of cosmopolitanism. The individual was thus created in paradoxical terms as a consequence of the universalism of a law of human immortality, which in economic terms was expressed in the notion of a *ius naturale*, which was always more the pragmatical setting of a political scenario for the ruling of vast empires than a fact which established equivalence among Mythico-Ritual axes and

equality in the control of the means of production. In this sense, it was always a narrative of domination, which reached its climax in the Christian metaphysical narratives of a Celestial Jerusalem, an imaginary transnational and transcendental community whose doors were jealously guarded by the political elite of the Terrestrial Jerusalem.

The narrative of the human being of the revolutions of the 18th Century a.z. will emerge⁵ out of the fusion of the cosmopolitan and transcendental elements of Antiquity with the humanist elements of the Enlightenment. In the 19th Century, the scientific humanism of the evolutionism will be added to these previous elements to later culminate the process in the narrative found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.⁶ The cosmopolitan Greek narratives -as those recovered by the philosophy of the Enlightenment- and the scientific materialism, introduced a critical element that will reproduced the old paradoxical tensions between economic and metaphysical actions present at the heart of the lyrical citizen narratives. The

⁵*The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* that the French Revolution published in 1789.

⁶ Adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10th 1948.

tension between the legal and the lyrical citizen is today a tension that occurs between the narrative of the human being, inheritor of transcendental myths, and the economical legal citizen, or professional citizen, a pawn in the structures of stratification. The contemporary picture is completed when we add the narratives developed after the second industrial revolution, with the developments of the meta-theoretical personality favored by the philosophy of the late 19th Century, and then by psychoanalysis and the avant-garde movements, which produced two new epistemological narratives of identity: the ludico-aesthetic ones and those of the meta-theoretical identity of gender.

The tension of identity of the social persona is, therefore, the result of a progressive unfoldment of paradoxes, linguistic and metaphysical, and of metaphysical tensions of political narrative. The linguistic metaphysical tension between the individual body and the collective narrative expresses the basic form of the paradox of communication, due to the individual centralization of something common. From this paradox was derived the linguistic trans-personality and the basic

representations of immortality of the communal persona, the totem, and later those of the specific ritual figures (like the shaman and later the king and the elites). The narratives of immortality transform the paradox of communication into the paradox of the immortality of the individual soul. This last paradox, expressed in the metaphysical terms of the universal law is the already mentioned paradox of Aeschylus, whereas in the economic terms of this very same universal law it is the paradox of the lyrical citizen: the proclamation of a transcendental identity non-economical, non-civic, when it was this civic economical persona the one who generated the conditions of possibility for the lyrical citizen. The narratives of transcendentalism took the shape of the narratives of the homo sapiens in the plane of the human law, from which the paradox of the universality of the human was derived.

After the mythic plane of the king-god, with the stratified urban communities, the linguistic paradoxes contributed to the specific formation of the tension of narrative identity derived from the economic actions, a tension that by being carried into a metaphysical plane will feedback the entire productive system.

In the narratives of the human law, once the transcendentalist narratives partially yielded in favor of the anthropological ones, the identity tension adopts meta-theoretical forms, whether as a tension of purely epistemological content, or as the narrative tension of the industrial and postindustrial citizen, in which meta-theoretical and ludic social personae are already formed. In this tension, however, are still present the contradictions that nourished the paradoxes of the lyrical citizen, now in the form of the concept of human being. It is interesting to observe that common to all these paradoxes there is a very basic form of narrative tension, or better put, anti-narrative, which seems unsurmountable as long as there may be cities and division of labor, in which there is a category of social persona, whether it may be called slave, servant, proletarian or governed, whose identity is negative, or in the best of cases, residual.

In what sense is the idea of human rights a narrative of domination? In the sense that it justifies the status quo of unequal control of the means of production and unequal control of the means of State violence. The problem is not in the content of the Declaration of 1948, which, in fact, expresses an ideology

of cooperation and diversity which is well harmonized with the strength of intelligence in its evolutionary development, but in the hypocrisy for its implementation, for it requires a new economic order, and with it, a new ontological narrative for the human being.

How can we transform a transcendental narrative of domination into a human cosmopolitical constitution? We cannot, for our Western Mythico-Ritual axis is based in the transcendental persona represented by the lyrical citizen, and we should need a new economic and metaphysical narrative capable of creating meaningful human lives on this earth, otherworldliness-free. But how could we renounce the only relief from the stress imposed by social stratification? How could we renounce the wonderful dream of a paradoxical but nirvanic private identity amidst the suffocating pressure of the social communities created by our sleepwalking species?

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To be here

The fundamental primitive determination of the mythico-ritual axis of the human law is the declaration of being here and now. I am here and you are here; everything else has to be understood from such statements and accommodate to its emotional topology. It is an ontology of vitality and adventure, of open roads and new beginnings, thus, of dangers, though also of fulfillments: the past has to come to meet us right here, now, mute gods have to make way for an endless desire of communication. I talk to thee and thus I narrate my identity. We are here, detached from kin and lineage, our only line is the horizon, and living so we honor the ancestors, and give them room in the new temple of the genetic code, together with bacteria, plants and beautiful animals. Prophets, Saints, Messiahs and Gods don't live here, but we do, HERE...NOW... The dreams of the past cannot be our present nightmares, they won't be.

To be here is to be precarious, an outcast from the universal law, for such is to be human, and much more. There was no bravery before the human law. There were madness and wild hormones, there were tales of otherworldliness to lull the fears, to trick you down, but not brave hearts facing meaninglessness and error and mistake. For the universal law, to be is to be there and later, and other, i.e. Gods.

The reaction against universal law is over: ancestors and constellations are very well where they are, no need them closer or farther. We are simply here and now, singing our myths, meeting our limits and outgrowing them, for beyond the human law extends the untamed strength of life-intelligence, Zoe...

Self-Reliance

Another trait of human law ontology is offered in the concept of self-reliance, not so much in Emerson's terms, as a dialectic of great men and their struggle with their society -an annex to genius religions- but as the feeling of being at home in life. This is my life, my here and now in the living process, and I trust it in its plain movements, accept its limitations and particular nonsenses, our meaningful and meaningless myths. I soar with its high hormones and get low on frustrations, for life is my house no less than death and oblivion and astronomical dances of annihilation; I know it and do not deny it anymore.

Emerson proposed: insist on yourself, never imitate. Such naïve adolescent bravery –I recognize it for I had it too- is a drive towards individuation that can hardly be avoided, and is felt in different degrees by all, therefore is the common, the opposed to your individual self (that narrative of your emotions

in relation to the group), and not by imitation, but by genetic programming (another kind of mimesis), by the force of emotions which impose their protocols time and again. I don't want to be unique, I couldn't anyway, that's sheer madness of the ancient myths of the King God. I rather be the embracing breath of thought. I trust thinking for it is not only mine, but yours too, and the voice of the dead. How could life be without the words of the dead? Their tiny nucleic words. Could we rely on aminoacid soups? Should we?

On the beautiful and the sublime

I have heard a peasant calling beautiful the ordered disposition of his farm, or what he called ordered, an invisible pattern of work superimposed to the land, together with its expectancies, projects and dreams. Homer came to mind, calling beautiful the wind when it blew the sail in a propitious manner. How conditioned to our basic emotions our sense of beauty! The best poets have n-arized them so much that they seem new entities. And these entities, when they are related to the social emotions give the ground for our modern sense of beauty. Sexual attraction, the tool for the perpetuation of the species, became the cosmic force of a blessed existence, the rewards of paradise, the inexhaustible fountain of energy and delight. Motherhood, no less divine and beautiful in our songs, gave a model for the understanding of the universe, and we contemplate it through the eyes of art in religious ecstasy, i.e., in a self-reassuring communal action.

What do we mean when we say that a person is beautiful? Besides the mating intentions, conscious or unconscious, it is basically a statement of approval, the fact that someone fits in our plans, in a narrative about life and ourselves that can be more or less transcendentalized, but that expresses basically the emotion of the peasant in relation to his land. And what do we mean when we say that a thing or an action is beautiful? Well, the very same statement of approval. The concept of beautiful is related to property and possession, to the actions of pertaining and belonging, which imply a narrative of identity, which demand the reassurance of identity. In this sense is opposed to the experience of the sublime, which annihilates identity. Our concept of beautiful shows our limitations, the frontiers of our individuation, our narrative of identity, and therefore, is a secondary concept for the artist of the limen, like a subsidiary reference frame forgotten when the adventure of creation begins.

Canon and narratives of domination

The idea of a literary canon is a variation of traditional censorship that makes only sense in the general processes of enculturation and development of narratives of domination. It certainly helps the teacher to reduce the number of candidates to be read on a classroom, but does a poor service to creativity endlessly repeating a transcendental pattern of inspired geniuses giving the law (literary or otherwise) to an ignorant humankind. When some years ago Harold Bloom made his famous top-ten hits in the History of Literature, leaving Hamlet and Don Quixote to play a very disputed final, after a disqualifying process of other literary works, he was consciously marking a censorship general reference, a nihil obstat for future works that creates an unreasonable mortgage for future generations. Media industry (publishing houses and general audiovisual ones) benefits from this trivial pursuit endeavors as much as the lover of literature is impaired. We do not read the way people read 100 years ago or 1.000. In fact, the web is reshaping the

publishing world and the art of literature faster than ever before. The ratio et auctoritas of the censor has only place in medieval societies where the citizen remains forever a child, not in a society centered around the narratives of the human law. The idea of the canon would finally disappear once it is understood that to a desert island is better to bring paper and pen than any particular book, for writing and reading are self-constructing tools (both socially and individually) that expand our memory capabilities, allowing the construction of more rich and deeper realities.

Social media and endorphins

Affective neuroscience postulates a neural circuit for the regulation of the mammal emotion of the social bond. Curiously, this circuit is located in the same cerebral areas where the sexual and the maternal emotions are located, and near also to the processing areas of pain. This circuit is responsible for the distress that mammals suffer from separation (specially in the young ones), but in its positive function is related to the experience of pleasure in bonding. The process is mediated by endorphins and oxytocin, like in the maternal emotional system, i.e., is a pleasurable experience. Oxytocin is relevant to the formation of group memories, and therefore, to the creation of myths. We are biologically conditioned to be social, as was pointed out by Aristotle in a famous passage of his Politics. In this sense, social media feed in our needs. They give endorphins, and make us addicted to our own opioids and sexual neurotransmitters. But this is not new, is what the group always did, although implies a displacement of the formation of

memories and myths from the traditional settings of the geographical city, to an eclectic virtual market realm whose narratives of identity are conditioned by the economy of globalization, which is establishing a mythical–ritual axis with more elements of the plane of the universal law than with those of the plane of the human law, resembling more some sort of new traditional religion: the psychological problems of immortality are left to the old traditions and money regulates the rest of the emotional realm, while the problems of origins are passed to science.

Dictionaries and Pantheons

According to Herder, language is a register of the evolution of the human soul, and due to the fact that our first innerization of the world was theological, our dictionaries are pantheons.⁷ Let's put aside for the moment the theological part of the argument, for theological myths are later elaborations of myths of the *anima mundi*, whose main figure is not the god, but the ancestor, and translate the idea to the theory of morphisms.

1. Our first exomorphisms were in the symbolic spheres of the ancestors, gods and the supernatural.
2. Those exomorphisms were endomorphized, rendered familiar through the use of metaphors. With the example of *the eye of Ra*. The sun is exomorphic, belongs to the realm of literal representations of the god Ra, but is vitalized through the metaphor of the eye, and comes closer to our vital experience.

⁷ See *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*. Christian Friedrich Boss. Berlin . 1770. p.44.

Exomorphisms must have a minimal endomorphic connection in order to be referents at all.

3. With the passage of time they become completely endomorphic and acritic concepts, id est, part of a dictionary.

Our dictionaries are not strictly pantheons, neither geological strata of the process of mythologization, for languages have a shorter *life span* than the mythologization process (as we see in Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism), but are simply a web of endomorphisms.

Quid tibi tanto operest, mortalis?

There is a wonderful passage in Lucretius in which Nature speaks to the old dying man who wails aloud, over-complaining about his own death: What troubles you so much, oh mortal? The passage is part of a long funerary advice for those who do not practice the dreams of an afterlife, a consolation before death that follows the principles of the human law.

If you lived well, what is all this groan and moan about? Why don't you, like a banqueter fed full of life retire, and rest in peace forever, you greedy?

But if you lived a miserable life, if all you once had is now spilt and lost, why do you lament the end of your pains, why would you like to add more, you fool?

The one who lived gathering blessings develops greed, a condition of the dopaminic emotional system in which the neurotransmitters responsible for the movement and search functions of the organism cannot be turned off. It is curious how such a lack of balance has been favored in relation to economic

matters and discourage in relation to thinking, precisely the ground where it would find its own limits: the dopamine cause.

The fool who lives a miserable life and still wants to continue is showing a condition of extreme fear, an unhealthy response to the enculturation myths of death, the metaphysical morphine provided by religions which extends checks of immortality wrapped in the uncertainties of a trial controlled by a long list of (difficult to avoid) superstitions in relation to family and group.

The manipulation of these matters is the technology of immortality, a way of life and a profession since the times of the myths of Osiris. It was the counterpart to the development of a genuine private sphere of emotion, of self-identity and self-consciousness, i.e. a narrative of a person in me, in you, which is independent of the economic personae which we have to perform within our human group. The lyrical citizen claims his/her immortality as the logical development of a conscious life, for we feel that what we are is not limited to our particular body or circumstances (part of the Aeschillus Paradox).

Fear of dead is only overcome by a better understanding of life, and by this I mean an understanding of its processes through the

modern myths of astrobiology, contrasting them with the Ancient myths and developing our own understanding. The art of dying on time, neither becoming a zombie nor a priest of senseless early deaths, is an art to be developed by each one of us. Grow up: nobody can tell you what is your life or your death, nobody! Think-live by yourself, from this amazing here and now.

The Knight of the Sad Countenance

To live like the character of a book, by an inspiring myth, to die if needed. This narrative of domination which ties us to a foundational myth and is enacted socially as love for the Mother-Father Land, for the ancestors, prophets and messiahs of the group, becomes at once a critique of the social values when the totem is called Dulcinea del Toboso. Like a theorem proven from wrong assumptions, but reaching the right conclusion nonetheless, Alonso Quijano's crusade against injustice, dullness and hypocrisy of life is still today a lesson on the value of ideals: to transform the world through love for the receding horizon. Dulcinea might be ugly and rude, with overnight onion-salad breath, but when surfing the sunset colors, as she constantly does in Don Quixote's eyes, no other Queen or divine entity compares to her. Dulcinea, like all our ideals, is indifferent to us; they are simply our wonderful madness or innocent interpretation of the received myth. To realize this was the sadness of Alonso, my sadness, my joy; for only by realizing

it we become free of the unreasonable weight that we put in our hearts by loving the non-existing ether. And yet, this craziness cannot be renounced, for it is how life surmounts itself and how another day can be worth living. The moment we don't, we sink to the bottom of Sancho's deluded dream of golden shitty Baratarias.

Free Will

If the social persona is a mythical construction of the group, our individuation is a social narrative constructed with some of the personae developed in the economic actions, either of the present or the past. There is no free will but not because there is fate or a divine plan, but because our will, linked to the basic emotion of vitality (the dopaminic system that is in charge of stimulating the individual in its search for whatever is needed to survive), is just like the will of others, a will to power. This does not mean that I cannot choose among different things, but the person who chooses is not more an individual than the narratives that he or she identifies as himself or herself, and choice is always conditioned by basic emotions and their n-aryzation in the mythical actions. The concept of freedom has basically meaning in juridical terms, as a narrative which maximizes the diversity of a group, and therefore, its power for survival. Sometimes, however, when we understand the precariousness of

our situation, we might develop some enaryzations in the works of liminal art.

Where are we going?

If evolution does not have a specific directionality, it seems rather absurd to think that human history does. Human life is conditioned by the impulse to survival, like any other form of life, i.e. it is regulated in its most basic actions by the will to power, to continue, to overcome obstacles and prevail, repeating itself in the next generation. Such worthy endeavors, despite their futility in astrobiological terms, are wrapped in dense metaphysic constructions to the point of forgetting the survival basis of our actions and believing the so constructed myth as the way things (universe and us) are. We basically keep going in the same directions not by a cosmological decree sealed at the beginning of time, but by the inertia produced by some chance choices which became increasingly more complex.

Where do we go from here? A rational action of survival would require the end of those fairy tales we live by and the

construction of myths based in the human law (i.e. modern fairy tales), but that is unthinkable, since the studies in the demographics of atheism show that maybe only 2% of the world's population are done with those transcendental myths which condition our life on earth. There is not a *telos* in our history, neither transcendental nor immanent, is just a matter of human choices conditioned in their more basic level by the environment. Rational choices are expressions of the continuous rationality which life-intelligence unfolds, and are the bases for those choices is that we call freedom.

There is no more goal than the trip itself. We need nothing else; the wind in the sails, the playful joy of the waves, the eternal call of our nostalgia for nowhere...

Physics and Metaphor

When science steps out of isomorphic functions embraces the misty world of metaphors, for its codomains become under-determined by the structure of the domain and the rule which constitutes the function. Codomains are the epistemological pain in the neck. Say that we construct a function, ϕ , which pairs a theoretical object with an empirical one. Such epistemological function has proven to be surjective, in very simple terms is what the duality wave-particle shows. Thus, ϕ has not inverse, ergo there is not an isomorphism between theory and fisis. Physics is nothing but a well-organized (at best) set of metaphors, useful metaphors in a universe that we basically do not understand i.e. we cannot encompass it on a contemporary mythical frame.

The Spanish Narrative of Identity

What is the meaning of being Catalan, or Spanish, or English for that matter? It is evident that the correspondent narratives of political identity express both a particular historical inertia and the very basic need for a group identity in order to function in an economic milieu. Those basic needs have deep roots in human emotional nature and imply old narratives fully equipped with hard metaphysics. And so we heard, in a not too distant past, of a *unity of destiny in the universal* in relation to Spain, or of a *manifest destiny* in relation to the British Empire.

A nationality expresses, unavoidably, a set of metaphysical beliefs, for the very concept grew up in the middle of a particular European milieu, linked to particular Institutions. To declare oneself Spanish or Catalan, would be merely the expression of a belief in certain Institutions, a rather accidental question related to the place where one happens to be born or live. However, in modern Europe, and even more so in contemporary EU, the notion of the distinct and unique identity

of the people living in one of its territories fails to make sense beyond local gastronomical variations, and even that has disappeared in the cities. The question of the linguistic differences simply veils the common roots of most of its languages and what is more important, the common roots of its main myths and economic actions both in the European continent and abroad.

The freedom to choose a political identity is a corollary of the Human Rights Declaration. Such statement implies that, somehow, the one that makes the choice has a definite identity previous to the choice, something which in turn implies that there is a unity in such identity, but this is senseless in political terms, and can only be derived from the imposition of a political majority to the rest of a society. Thus, the independence obtained by secession can never be more than an act of violence, and the minority forced to independence is the victim of such aggression. On the other hand, if political unity can only be achieved at the price of repressing the will for a metaphysical self-determination, such unity will be weak and unstable,

furthermore will violate fundamental principles of Human Rights.

Will Spain be able to elaborate a new narrative of collective identity that could include the metaphysical aspirations of its different people? Despite the fact that the EU is failing as a political project, the people of Europe (and Spaniards and Catalans certainly are Europeans) are condemned to understand each other or to succumb to Asia's momentum.

The Strength of Freedom

In moments when Europe has its fundamental values tested by the recalcitrant narrowness, cruelty and ignorance of religion, I recall Pericles' Funeral Oration, as recorded by Thucydides, amazed by its relevance: "We throw open our city to the world, and never by alien acts exclude foreigners from any opportunity of learning or observing, although the eyes of an enemy may occasionally profit by our liberality..." (Perseus Project translation of *Peloponnesian War*). The barbarians, those that do not believe in the myths of the human law and impose their nightmares to others, are now forcing us to close our borders, and what is worst, to close our minds, and change our beliefs for a dream of security that could never be fully guaranteed. Thus we are caught in a web of terror and lose our identity to a poor and sad trivialization of our democratic political foundations. In liminal times, basic emotions take control over the neocortical *enarized* symbolic constructions that we made with those basic protocols of survival.

The strength of democracy is based on the ideal of freedom. Freedom has not a transcendental meaning, but is the possibility for the construction of any human meaning for our life. It is related to ends and goals, but not limited by them, for freedom has an instantaneous dimension, a here and now nature which does not postpone, which escapes from the delays of vacant promises. Freedom is thus inextricably related to creation, to poiesis, of the individual and of the social persona of the group, and for that reason is felt strongly in relation to art. However, the creations of freedom are not related to a *this or a that*, but are instead the processes of unfoldment of our life awareness, the awareness of its limited span and the need for an instantaneous fulfillment of its potentialities, the extension of our individuation into the complete movement of life on earth.

In this fight, individuation is at stake, together with our ideal of a society founded on human law. We cannot have one without the other. Let's then hold to our ideal of Liberty (political and juridical freedom) for there lies our strength. Our European

wealth is not measured by mere physical standards of living, those are the symptoms of a society involved in the transformation of the material milieu, but by the political liberties which allow the grounds for our personal human freedom, our dearest narrative of identity. This means, as Pericles new, that we have more to lose than our barbarian enemies, and thus, that our involvement in the fighting will not be small.

Antigone

There is an interpretation of the myth of Antigone based on the concept of civil disobedience, i.e. in terms of the tension between myths of the human law and myths of the universal law. Has the universal law or law of the gods (the God) prevalence over human law (civil law)? The question is so confusing that it barely makes sense. Curiously enough the universal law is so embedded in our most basic valuations that we mistake it to express the essential human nature, and feel human law as a mere human appendix of the profane ways of the meaningless modern world. From this point of view, just like Thoreau did by refusing to pay taxes to a Government which condoned slavery, Antigone refused to comply with a law which condemned the corpse of her brother to be the plaything of the crows and a banquet for the dogs. The primitive or metaphysical determination which orders the burial of corpses clashes against the functional or economic determination that denies any entity and identity to the enemies of the city, of the group. Very often

ethical problems have no consistent solutions since, like old cities, gather within their walls contradictory codes for action corresponding to different space-time scenarios of the life of the group. And so, Creon and Antigone count both with arguments in favor of their actions.

The myth of the Oedipus saga expresses better than any other Greek myth the implications and contradictions of the narratives of immortality which started under the mythico-ritual axes of the universal law. They are today completely relevant, for the individuation problem has been barely understood. Antigone and her family are the living examples of the precarious nature of individuation, the fragility of the more basic social persona, father, mother, son, etc. which can be tangled in the most confusing way when the dice of the gods rumble freely over the table of the world. Antigone wants for Polyneices, and for herself, the narrative of an identity, only complete and closed at death, but at a meaningful death, a death with a tomb, and a name, a death which fades an existence in the short vibration of the social memory. Tebas wants to dissolve the memory of the

Oedipus family in the womb of the earth burying Antigone alive in a cave, where she faces the liminal nature of life: existing betwixt and between light and darkness, flower of one day, a mystery for itself, deprived of a narrative beyond the basic and blind impulses of the animal emotions.

Giants turning into Windmills

I knew someone who believed that in Rama's time (if there ever was such a space-time) people were nine meters tall. He also thought that the loquacious snake that talked to Eve in her lost paradise was a mere figment of a poet's imagination. As a matter of fact there are, full groups, sects, churches and assemblies that would support the literal meaning of one of these myths (usually denying the other). It is difficult to see our beliefs as a myth, easy those of others.

What is there? I mean it in its more general sense, what is there in the universe or in front of us? The basic question of ontology will remain a continuous engine of delusions and misunderstandings as long as we hold our naïve conceptions of myth. Giants turn into windmills and these into power generators, machines that deal with electrons, or shall we say fermions of the lepton kind?, or what myth shall we use to express our ignorance?, or is it knowledge? The thinnest razor's

edge separates both, a shade-like filament projected over our minds by the same mysterious object in different moments of our fuzzy and presumptuous history.

Kurukshetra: the battlefield of life

Old Norse: *awe* is *agi*, a feeling of great respect and liking.

Let's add: a sense of expansion and greatness, a blissful states which includes surprise, and the arousal of the will to play, for *awe* is active...the conscious creation of an identity by expressing objects and actions which produce awe.

In the fight for Hastinapura, Prince Arjun transformed fear before Brahman into awe before existence, awe before the experience of the sublime.

It was when a golden sandstorm engulfed the arian chariot opening up the cloud of orange dust on the top of a deep blue hill. Below, in the plane, the fighting armies facing each other. Your family and your friends fight in both sides. Arjun wants an explanation for the nonsense of life, of battle. Reality seems simply like a cosmic mistake, an error.

What shall we do with our lives? How are we going to live them? Simple basic questions.

To move from fear to wonder, to awe and amazement.

An arrow might kill us tomorrow, but today we have wine and poems of old epics, when the gods rumbled the earth, Krishna and mighty Vishnu, drunk and starving rishis dreaming the heavens. So pour some more wine from last night and sing for me that immortal song of the war between the Kurus and the Pandavas.

Again on the Sublime

The Kantian way: sublime is the starry night above us, the unending ocean, whatever overcomes our sense of individuation.

Beyond that: “Sublime” is a very complex emotion. It is the experience of dissolution into something greater, ampler, wider, newer, everlasting.

In the Bhagavad-Ghita, the sublime as Brahman, with and without attributes produces the reaction of the deepest fear, the fear of dissolving. But there is also awe and wonder

The experience of the sublime is overwhelming and dissolves the ego, which surrenders before the beauty of the fleeting spring of the rose, the slow streaming strings of Mahler at the end of the summer, the flocks of birds at sunset.

The concept of the “sublime “ is related to traditional religious experiences. Can we free our experience of the sublime from the images of the past?

Falling star

The frog from the lotus

Into the bottomless instant

Samsara

Samsara, Maya, the illusion, what is not real. There is a non-transcendentalist interpretation of the concept which does not appeal to a substantial reality, or truth or whatever final and definite referent for things, for the universe and for us. Samsara is the trivial pursuit and pain of most human lives. Bound to nothing, to empty air, to obsolete myths, withered patterns of emotional protocols that maintain life at the high price of repetitive nothingness and misery. It is not only the trait of modern life, old inertias of transcendental thought carry the same burden, a hunt for phantoms, a feast of crazy magpies stealing the shining shit and thinking it a golden treasure. Heavy human sleepwalking, chained to our physiology and proud of it.

Once you see the patterns of the eternal return of the movements of life, the endless repetition, the perennial dreams of choice, then the game is over, and you find yourself out, as good as dead, dead for the others. How to live then? For what purpose? Out of compassion for the sleepers? There is not a general valid

answer for these questions. You have to find out for yourself, i.e. die many times, and resurrect. How hard are the ways of Zoe, how precarious our shelters: broken hearts are the only secure way to yonder shores.

Sequential time, mathematics and narrative

First Act of Intuitionism. Completely separating mathematics from mathematical language and hence from the phenomena of language described by theoretical logic, recognizing that intuitionistic mathematics is an essentially languageless activity of the mind having its origin in the perception of a move of time. This perception of a move of time may be described as the falling apart of a life moment into two distinct things, one of which gives way to the other, but is retained in memory. If the twofold thus born is divested of all quality, it passes into the empty form of the common substratum of all twofolds. And it is this common substratum, this empty form, which is the basic intuition of mathematics. [Brouwer. 2011, 44]

If we understand Brouwer's first act of intuitionism devoid of its mystical overtones, propositions such as a basic *mind's intuition of the passage of time*, or the passing of twofolds *into the empty form of the common substratum of all twofolds*, his distinction of a life moving into two separate things, gives us all

the psychological foundation that mathematics needs to start its conceptual edifice. The proposal is rather simple, as it could be expected from such a foundational question: cognitive acts are based on a intuitional pre-logical distinction, a condition of possibility for thinking, the intuition of sequentiality. However, if we do not ground the act of distinction on biological basis, we run the risk of ascribing to the *twoity* or foundation of sequentiality thus defined -as Brouwer himself does- to a transcendental content. His understanding of language uniquely on human terms justifies his separation between language and mathematics, but it does not make any psycho-biological sense. The act of distinction which characterizes the intuition of time in Brouwer's sense precedes the use of our human languages but not of languages in general, i.e., of communication among living creatures. A *twoity*, therefore, precedes also the linguistic construction that we call number -even the concept of numerosity- and denotes an action of separation, giving the condition of possibility for any verbal communication and narrative.

Contemporary neuroscience has confirmed the sequential character of the linking of two mental operations. Despite previous suppositions about the essentially parallel processing mode of the human brain, Sackur and Dehaene [2009] have shown that the linking of two conscious processes of the brain have an almost-sequential character, and can be accurately described by the model of a Von-Neuman like machine (or a Turing machine as well). Curiously, according to the experience gathered by their tests with basic arithmetic operations, there is a parallel functioning of the brain for computation at an unconscious level, but such workings would produce stochastic nodes of data that would be further processed and composed in a sequential manner. Expressed in musical terms: the unconscious processes would give the vertical or harmonic, the multidimensional aspects of the procedure, a complex way for the checking out of information and data of a multiprocessor architecture in which the same information is processed through different channels at the same time. On the other hand, conscious processes are given by the horizontal or contrapuntal passing of one chord (object) to the next according to a set of

rules different to the vertical ones. Brouwer's *twoity* would refer to this concatenation, the syntactic monoid structure of language, but says nothing about the vertical multiplicity of the objects of the monoid, the semantic memory checking in which the past is recombined to produce a synthetic image for the conscious syntactic process. The interpretation given by Sackur and Dehaene suggests a continuous semi-stochastic filtering out of the plurality of the unconscious processing of information into a single line of consciousness and determination whose performance is conditioned by the new data entering the system, i.e., by the action of the human being in a cultural and natural milieu. The experiments performed have little semantic content, and it would be interesting to carry out further experimentation with narrative verbal processing in order to ascertain the mechanisms of the stochastic vertical processing of communication. However, if there is a general constraint of sequentiality in the conscious chaining of mental operations, as Sackur and Dehaene's experiments seem to prove, narrative constructions (and mathematical ones) would be conditioned by such biological constraints, reflecting general epistemological

strategies for survival and adaptation rooted in the unconscious addition and complexification of numerous simple neural processes, but not by Brouwer's substratum of *twoities*, or by any other transcendental condition of possibility for human thinking.

References

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Intelligence, Consciousness and the Unheimlich

The construction of our myths, whether traditional or modern (scientific), did not follow a cosmic plan of progressive unfoldment. They are not, as Schelling thought, tautegoric expressions of an extra-human force wrapped around itself which becomes self-evident and acting in the course of time, knowing itself in the process, expressing itself through the physical means available and formed at that particular time. They are neither, as less pantheistically inclined minds thought, metaphors of an analogous extra-human reality, shadows of a true essence which convey reflected meanings which our petty minds can hardly understand, though we benefit from their eternal radiance in the filtered versions given to us by officials and priests. In order to have a metaphor, we need something which is not a metaphor to relate it to, a referent whose ontic nature is independent. Even if there was such a thing we could never tell, for its independence would make it independent from us, and therefore, unthinkable. Our common metaphors work as endomorphisms, in which both ends of the transformations

are clear and given by language tradition, but we could not apply them when one of the extremes is made of exomorphic representations of *gods, meanings of the universe*, etc.

Myths are grounded in our economic actions of survival, enarized in different degrees of complexity through cumulative processes of choices and filtering out from the ocean of life experience, picking particularly what helps and contributes to the life of the human group. This process of experience and memory filtering transforms, as Feuerbach noticed, what is *unheimlich* into *heimlich*, changing what is foreign to our Lebenswelt into common language and practice, another object for our mind home. The result of the process is myth, representations of the *unheimlich* which show ways to cope with it, and how to combine sequences of meaning which will end up flourishing in conscious thinking. The apeiron is given shape and linguistic form, determining what is not our human house and purpose. What gives shape to the apeiron is what I call *intelligence*, or *life-intelligence*, an autopoietic action which gives form to the world at the same time that it shapes itself (what could be called a *mimetic process*). To be conscious, in

human terms (beyond simple body consciousness), is the power to elaborate a narrative which can be understood by our human group, but is a different process to the process of intelligence. We call *self-consciousness* to a particular myth which relates our body individuation to a Weltanschauung myth, i.e. a myth of individuation in relation to a community myth. In this sense, self-consciousness will always be an ethical myth, whose roots grow deeply in the Unterlebenswelt of emotional protocols, shared with the rest of life forms in different degrees.

Consciousness is therefore a result of intelligence's workings, a strategy for taming the unheimlich aspect of life, but its efficiency is only guaranteed only inasmuch we move within outside liminal experience. Consciousness is a liminoid construction, a myth built upon the abyss of vital actions, and can only work as a barrier against unheimlich experiences under mechanized narrative protocols, i.e. consciousness can only work as a ready-made or frozen intelligence, which is to say, as a limitation of life-intelligence: as death or fisis.

Epilogue in Spanish

Composición Liminal

Podríamos clasificar las obras musicales en tres grandes grupos conforme a que sus estéticas sean duales, formales, o liminales.

En la categoría dual, incluiríamos a Guillaume de Machaut, Dufay, Luis de Milán, Monteverdi y muchos de los compositores de la tradición italiana, así como a Mozart, Haydn, Chopin, Schubert, y otros.

La música dual se caracteriza por:

1. La facilidad de su expresión. Esta música parece fluir sin restricciones, es como una danza sin esfuerzo.
2. La música es externa para el artista, viene desde fuera. El compositor es un virtuoso de su lenguaje, pero no es un lenguaje auto generado y desarrollado mediante la

reflexión intelectual tanto como un lenguaje heredado que es capaz de hablar con extraordinaria destreza para expresar un amplio rango de emociones. El compositor *dual* habla a través de uno de los lenguajes musicales dados, el modalismo, el serialismo, los ragas o cualquier otro sistema que su cultura le haya proporcionado. Su virtuosismo consiste en la facilidad para expresar emociones en ese lenguaje.

3. La nostalgia. Las composiciones son una llamada nostálgica a un mundo de armonía superior y distante. La experiencia de este mundo se torna ansiosa y pesada comparada con ese reino cerrado de relaciones perfectamente definidas, movimientos equilibrados y gracia inigualable. Debemos recordar que la palabra nostalgia viene de la palabra griega *nostos*, que significa: la vuelta a casa, el viaje hacia el lugar al que uno pertenece.
4. La nostalgia produce una música de contrastes, de dualismo radical, que proviene precisamente de la

oposición de ese mundo ideal con el mundo de todos los días. Monteverdi lo expresaba así:

“Ahora soy consciente de que son los contrastes los que excitan nuestras almas, y que esa agitación es la meta de toda buena música. Como expresara Boecio: ‘La música se nos ha dado o bien para purificar o para degradar nuestra conducta.’”[1]

Por otro lado, compositores de la estética *formal* serían Bach, Glück, la mayoría de los de la tradición francesa y alemana, Stravinski, Webern, Boulez, Xenakis, y la mayoría de los compositores de música contemporánea.

Sobre la poética formal podríamos decir que:

1. Es el resultado de la reflexión y la reelaboración, de un plan cuidadoso. Cada obra se diseña al detalle de acuerdo con una estructura externa, y en este aspecto es igual que la composición dual, una estructura que le viene dada al compositor por su tradición cultural, aunque es supuestamente inherente al arte de

los sonidos. Como apuntaba Boulez, en su texto *Conclusión Partielle*:

“He tratado realmente de encontrar un método deductivo que me permita explicar y justificar mis acciones como compositor, y no me conformo con esbozar catálogos o muestras, o simplemente describir la forma en la que compongo cualquiera de mis obras. Esto me ha llevado a exigir de mis oyentes una cantidad considerable de reflexiones abstractas sobre las categorías y la clasificación de los diferentes problemas que han surgido, y admito que no siempre ha sido fácil.”[2]

Las demandas de Boulez para su audiencia son más las exigencias de la clase de *Álgebra 203* en una escuela de ingeniería estándar, pero ilustran perfectamente, en su posición extrema, lo que ya estaba implícito en las obras de Bach. Leibniz expresó esta concepción de la música con afilada exactitud: *Musica est exercitium arithmeticae occultum nescientis se numerare animi* (La música es el ejercicio oculto de la aritmética que se realiza por el alma sin saber que está

contando).[3] Esta parecería ser una noción pitagórica de la música, pero sólo lo es en la superficie ya que el número ha perdido todas las dimensiones cualitativas que tenía con los pitagóricos.

2. El compositor formalista expresa la inteligencia humana en relación a la belleza. Xenakis ejemplifica el extremo de esta actitud hacia la composición cuando dice que: “El criterio de belleza o fealdad no tiene sentido para el sonido, tampoco para la música que se deriva de este. La cantidad de inteligencia que los sonidos tienen debería de ser el único criterio verdadero para la validez de una música en particular.”[4]

Xenakis admitiría que la belleza, o la elección estética, podría jugar un papel secundario al tomar ciertas decisiones arbitrarias, pero no explica cómo medir la cantidad de inteligencia que tiene una pieza dada. Aunque sus procesos de composición implican que cuanto más matemático, id est, cuanto más simbólico sea el cálculo del compositor, tanto más inteligente será la pieza. Surge entonces una cuestión frente a la actitud del compositor *formalista*. ¿Por qué toda esta obsesión con la inteligencia? ¿Tenemos miedo por algún motivo de no ser lo

suficientemente inteligentes? Una respuesta completa a esta pregunta está más allá de mi propósito aquí, pero me gustaría señalar que este es el estadio final de un proceso iniciado por Platón hace 2400 años: el proceso del descrédito y la apropiación del mundo de las musas por la filosofía. De acuerdo con este punto de vista, la filosofía tiene la llave que abre la puerta de la creación musical, es decir, una forma especial de actividad cerebral posee el privilegio de la comprensión de la creatividad humana y de la vida en general. La belleza formal en la que el compositor está implicado lleva a una especie de absorción en un juego mental, una especie de contemplación lúdica, como podemos observar en los trabajos de Antón Webern o en el *Arte de la Fuga* de Bach, o en procedimientos de muchos compositores contemporáneos.

3. El compositor está escondido tras su obra la cual se ofrece como una verdad objetiva que proviene de un mundo objetivo y al que se accede por medio del ejercicio musical de la inteligencia. La separación aristotélica entre sujeto y objeto está plenamente activa en esta poética.

El tercer grupo de compositores está formado por los músicos liminales. Uno puede encontrarla en la mayoría de los músicos del Cante Jondo, y la mayor parte de la música *étnica* que se representa por todas partes en nuestro planeta. Los mejores ejemplos del mundo occidental los encontramos en la tragedia, los trovadores, Carlo Gesualdo, Ockheghem, Tomás Luis de Victoria, el Beethoven de los últimos cuartetos, algún Mahler, algunas piezas de John Cage, de Morton Feldman, Ligetti o de Steve Reich. Podríamos caracterizar la estética liminal de la forma siguiente:

1. La creación viene desde el interior del compositor, es la expresión de un movimiento existencial en su personalidad, de una lucha interna, no tiene nada que ver con el logro de una técnica ni con ningún tipo de virtuosismo.
2. Es la poética de los *límites* del arte. Por esta razón la forma es secundaria, el compositor no es un buscador de nuevas formas per se, sino que está interesado en la experiencia del proceso que lleva a la creación y

disolución de las formas en el limen o umbral psicológico emocional.

3. Las composiciones son composiciones de la *presencia*, dependen de un presente exacto en el que el artista o compositor da vida a una pieza musical en el aquí y ahora del presente eterno.
4. El amor místico. Como fue definido por los sufís o las tradiciones de bakhti y los trovadores.
5. Las obras liminales expresan la relación fundamental del compositor con su cultura y su comunidad.

El músico liminal es el artista como chamán. Y digo *músico* porque desde este punto de vista el intérprete pertenece a la misma fuerza que el compositor, no al ego del compositor, sino al impulso vital enarizado que es la creación estética.

La poética liminal tiene poco que ver con lo que normalmente consideramos intrínseco al arte musical: la teoría, las técnicas de interpretación, la historia musical, etc. El compositor liminal

puede que sea un músico iletrado, incapaz de leer o escribir una sola nota. Puede suceder también que sí sea capaz de leer y escribir música y que tenga lo que se considera una educación musical, pero toda su técnica siempre se usa como una escalera que lleva hasta el nivel deseado de arte, para luego ser olvidada. La discusión acerca de esta clase de música nos lleva entonces por caminos que difieren de aquellos por los que circulan todos los compositores y pensadores de estética formal, desde Aristoxeno a Bach, o desde Rameau a Xenakis.

La experiencia mística no tiene que ser religiosa específicamente, el compositor no tiene que ser un creyente en entidades o formas de orden transcendentales. Como apuntó Erich Neumann, “la ubicuidad del fenómeno místico muestra que hay formas teas y ateas, panteístas y panenteístas, pero también materialistas e idealistas, extrovertidas e introvertidas, personales y transpersonales de la experiencia mística. La experiencia de Dios como una aventura sagrada sólo representa una forma experimental y específica de misticismo, no es de ningún modo ni la más común ni, tal vez siquiera, la más significativa.”[5]

La paradójica naturaleza del limen se comprende mejor como una relación entre la *forma* y lo *informe*, o entre lo limitado (*peras*) y lo ilimitado (*apeiron*). A lo que llamo *forma* no es el griego *eidos*, forma o idea, sino a los objetos físicos y psicológicos que se crean y se destruyen desde el *apeiron*. La *forma* no es algo opuesto al contenido, más bien, molde y contenido se integran en la *forma*. Para poder comprender la dinámica del limen, deberíamos entender que el *apeiron* y la forma son modos de la determinación cognitiva: todo objeto, cada forma, es una particularización temporal diferente del *apeiron*. Desde un punto de vista físico, el *apeiron* es el flujo de la naturaleza y las formas son objetos limitados producidos por su determinación, es decir, por el establecimiento de un límite o una negación. Por medio de la música, el compositor se vuelve consciente de su propia temporalidad, una especie de tempo que pasa desapercibido en su día a día. La música le permite, y al oyente en general, darse cuenta de los diversos pulsos que dan *forma* a su constitución psicológica. No obstante, la estética musical liminal no es una

cuestión de autoconocimiento sino de autopoiesis mimética de identidad, individual y grupal.

Una composición es un fragmento mítico que en su función comunicativa transformará la identidad del intérprete y del oyente en la medida que produzca una experiencia liminal. La partitura es el mapa para ese viaje chamánico desde el *yo* al *tú*, un mapa que puede ser incluso innecesario, o secundario, si el compositor y el intérprete ya mantienen una relación *yo-tú*, o son la misma persona. El intérprete necesita mantener un equilibrio entre la necesidad de controlar su interpretación y su viaje a los límites donde experimenta la destrucción y creación de las *formas*. Pero el desarrollo de una técnica interpretativa tiene que ceder ante consideraciones existenciales más profundas, así como la perspectiva de éxito o fracaso al reproducir una pieza de música debe ceder ante el riesgo que supone hacer *floreecer* el *tú* musical frente a la audiencia. La acción mítica que supone la comunicación musical ante una audiencia es equivalente a la que se da en los entornos ceremoniales. Para que tal acción mítica sea completada es imprescindible la concurrencia activa de la audiencia en la

orientación psicológica que da el músico. De lo contrario, la acción liminoide no tendrá siquiera las connotaciones artísticas.

[1] *The Passionate Style. Preface to Madrigals of War an Love.* 1638. In *Pleasures of Music*. Edited by Jacques Barzun. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago. 1977. p. 46.

[2] Pierre Boulez. *Towards a Conclusion. Orientations*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge. Massachussets. 1986. p. 97.

[3] Cf. Leibniz. *Carta a Goldbach* 154 (carta de 1712). En Fubini, p.158.

[4] Iannis Xenakis. *Formalized Music*. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis. p. ix.

[5] Erich Neumann. *Mystical Man*. Trad. Ralph Manheim. *The Mystic Vision*. Papers from the Eranos Year Books. Ed. By Joseph Campbell. Princeton University Press. Bollingen Series. Vol. 6. Princeton. 1982. p. 381.

